

# The argument of the Epistle of saint Paule to the Colossians by Des. Erasmus of Rotterodame.



The Colossians are a people of Asia the lesse, dwelling nigh  
 vnto the Laodiceans. Them had not the Apostle Paul him  
 selfe seen, as whiche were instructed in the fapth of Christ,  
 either by the preaching of Archippus, or (as S. Ambrose  
 sayth) of Epaphras, who were with this matter put in trust.  
 In great leopardy were these people by reason of false Apostles, whiche  
 labored to byng them into a very perillous opinion, teaching them that  
 the sonne of God was not the meane and authoꝝ of saluacion, but that al  
 menne haue access and entrie vnto the father by the healse of Angels.  
 These men sayd further that forasmuche as in the tyme of the olde testa-  
 ment all thynges were done by the ministry and seruice of Angels, that  
 Christ the sonne of God was neither comen doune into the yearth, nor  
 would come. Beside this the same teachers with Christes doctrine myn-  
 gled Jewishnes and superstitious Philosophie, oblerupng and keepng  
 certain pointes of the lawe, supersticiously also honourng the Sonne,  
 the Moone, and starrs, with suche other smal trinkettes of this worlde,  
 bearing the Colossians in hand that they wer also bound to do the same.  
 Them biddeth Paule to remembre theyꝝ profession, evidently declaring  
 that whatsoeuer they had vntil that tyme obtained, was geuen vnto the  
 by none Angel, but by Christ the creatoꝝ of Angels, that he onely was  
 head of the churche, and that saluacion shuld at nomans hand be soughe  
 for, but at his. In whiche treatise he also defendeth his owne authoritie, a-  
 gainst suche as laboured to empye it. After whiche he geueth them di-  
 ligent warnng to take heede, lest they be deceiued with þ high wordes of  
 false Apostles, or forged visions of angels, and so by meane ther of fall ei-  
 ther to Jewishnes, or els into the superstition of Philosophie. All whiche  
 pointes Paule in the two fyrst chapters entreateth of. In the other two  
 he exhorteth them to vertuous and godly liuyn, namely geuyng rules,  
 how the wife shoulde vse her selfe towarde her husband, how the husband  
 againe shoulde vse his wife, after what sorte the father shoulde be towarde  
 his children, and the children likewise towarde theyꝝ fathers, the seruā-  
 tes to theyꝝ masters, and the masters to theyꝝ seruātes. The last part,  
 sayng that he warneth Archippus of his duetie, is all spent in commen-  
 dations. This Epistle was written out of prison in Ephesus, as sent  
 by Tychicus, as Paule him selfe in this present epistles saith. The  
 latine argumentes shewe, that it was also sent thither by Ones-  
 imus, for so him selfe writeth also in the last chapter. The  
 Greke titles recorde, that it was sent from the cytie of  
 Rome, and in deede thence sent he Onesimus,  
 whom Paule beynge prisoner there had  
 made a christian man.

# The paraphrase vpon the epistle of the Apostle saint Paule to the Colossians, by Des. Crasimus of Rotterdam.

## The fyrst Chapter.

**The title.** Paule an Apostle of Iesu Christ, by the will of God and brother Timotheus. To all  
saintes, whiche are at Colossa and byrthen, that belue in Christ.



**Paule an Ambassadour of Iesus Christ,**  
and that not by any mans ordinaunce, but by the  
will of God the father, and Timothe, whom for  
pecite consent in preaching the gospel I counte  
as my brother, to the dwellers at Colossa, whiche  
haue both a confidence in Iesus Christ, and also  
accorpyng to his doctrine liue a hoip life, now  
throughe like kynde of profession becomen our  
dearly beloued byrthen.

**The first.** Grace be vnto you and peace from God our father and the lord Iesu Christ.

Grace and peace be there among you from God our father, that as ye  
are freely reconciled vnto him, ye may likewise euen as byrthen that  
haue one comen father, one towardes an other of you alwaye noyde mu-  
tual unitie and con corde.

**The second.** We geue thanks to God the father of our lord Iesus Christ alwaye for you in  
our prayes, for we haue heard of your fayth in Christ Iesu, and of the loue whiche ye  
beare to all saintes, for the hopes sake whiche is layd vpon in hope for you in brauen, of  
whiche hope ye beare before by the true word of the gospel, whiche is come vnto you:  
euen as it is fruitfull (and groweth) as it is also among you, for the day in the whiche  
ye heard of it, and had experience in the grace of God through the truth, as ye learned  
of Epaphia our deare fellowe seruaunt, whiche is for you a faythfull minister of Christ,  
whiche also beliaeth vnto vs your loue whiche ye haue in the spirit.

And albeit it hath not yet hitherto been my chaunce to see you, yet in  
my continual prayes made to God, and the father of oure Lord Iesus  
Christ both for your sakes I geue him thanks for his benefites bestowed  
vpon you, and bespye him also daily to increase the same his giftes, and  
also to pfectue them, after þe Epaphia we heard of your fayth, wherby  
my trust is, ye shalbe saured, not by helpe of Angels, but throughe the free  
bounteousnes of our Sauiour Anoynted, by who it hath pleased God the  
father to geue vs al goodnes. For him both Anoynted would he haue  
to be called, because of him al shuld receiue helth, a Sauiour, because no  
ma shuld elswhere looke for saluacion. And by him not onely pfectued  
we a vnderstode your confidence in him, but also your chastite ioynd ther  
with, whiche as Christ gaue example, ye beare towardes good people, rat-  
tely myndyng to do so; them, not for any hope of auantage, that ye  
thinke to receiue thereby, but in hope of the euerylastyng life, whiche ye wel  
knowe

We haue  
heard of your  
fayth in Christ  
Iesu.

knowe to larde by in heauen for your godlynes. And suerly to this trust  
are ye broughte throughe the preaching of Chyestes gospel, whiche ye  
persuade your selfe to be a docterin of suche trueth, y<sup>e</sup> albeit it make great  
promises, & suche as neuer were heard of before this tyme, yet forsomuch  
as God is the autho<sup>r</sup> of them, ye thinke that the same cannot be but true.  
And as the same gospel throughtout all the worlde hath been dayly more  
and more enlarged: so is it now come to you, euery day growyng and en-  
creasynge, more and more plentifully spredynge it selfe abroade, bringyng  
forth the fruite of good workes, whiche freely growe out of chrystian  
charitie, as it hath done in you, growyng styl from better to better. such  
spnce that tyme, wherein ye first heard and knowe, that throught the free  
goodnes of God all these spnces are forgiven, whiche beleue the gospel,  
if to they<sup>r</sup> right sayth they abioyne pure & vnfained charitie. For so were  
ye taught by my dearely beloued felow in seruite, and messenger of trust  
Epaphras, who hath among you sincerely done myne office, after suche  
loyte in Iesus Chyestes behalfe preaching the gospel, that he hath in all  
pointes been found without corruption. As I therfore by him taught  
you, so by him againe vnderstand I your good wyll againe towarde vs,  
not meanyng suche vniuersall good wyll, as that is, when men wishe well to  
to they<sup>r</sup> frendes and acquaintaunce, but a spiritual and heauynly fauor,  
wherewith we live to loue all suche, by whom the gloire of the gospel is let  
forth and established, though we with our bodily eyes neuer sawe them.

Of which  
hope ye learn  
before by the  
true word of  
the gospel.

Whiche also  
is your love  
which ye haue  
in the spirit.

For this cause we also, such spnce the way we heard of it, haue not ceased to praye  
for you, and to desire that ye might be fulfilled with the knowledge of his will, in all  
wisdom and spiritual vnderstandyng, that ye might walke worthy of the lord, that  
in al thinges ye may please, being fruitful in al good workes, & increasynge of y<sup>e</sup> know-  
ledge of god, strenghted with all might, throught his glorious power, vnto al patience  
and long sufferynge, with ioyfulnes, geuyng thanks vnto the father, which hath made  
us meete to be partakers of the inheritance of saintes in light. Whiche hath redeemed  
us from the power of darkness, & hath translated us vnto the kyngdome of his deare  
sonne. By whome we haue redemption throught his blood, such the forgiveness of tynnes,  
whiche is the image of the invisible god, first begotten of al creatures, for by him wee  
all thinges created, that are in heauen, and that are in yered, visible & invisible, whe-  
ther they be maieste of lordship, ether rule or power. All thinges were created by him  
and for him, and he is before all thinges, and by him all thinges haue their being.

The text.

And for this cause we againe not as one unworthy of this your fauor,  
heartely loue you againe, though I neuer sawe you, by and by such fei  
that day wherein we were first certified of your sayth and charitie, in my  
dayly prayers callynge vpon God for you, and with frequent petitions be-  
sechyng him, that it may please him in you to make perse and to bypnyng  
at full suche giftes, as he hath begunne to geue, that ye bothe may more  
thoroughly knowe his pleasure, being taught neither by worldly wise-  
dom, nor yet by any superstitious and vaine pertualion of some men, but  
by a spiritual wisdom and policie, wherof as ye haue already gotten a  
good part: so would I wishe, that ye lacked nothyng, that ye may in such  
godly perfection passe ouer your life, that the same be to gods hono<sup>r</sup>, and  
in al pointes also please him, lettynge no good thing vndone, for so doyng  
is the meane to please him.

Ye might be  
familiar with  
the know-  
ledge, &c.

## The paraphrase of Erasmus bypon the Epistle

For to geue onely a credence to the gospel is but a begynnyng to saluacion, but the same is with godly and holie woꝝkes made perfite and full. For sufficeth it to haue learned thꝛough preaching of the gospel, that God thꝛough his sonne Iesus Christ is the authoꝝ and woꝝker of saluacion, vntesse by the same knowledge ye growe byppe and byng sooth the frutes of christian charitie, continually profuryng from better to better, so iucely, constantly, and manfully standyng in them, that neither violence nor noyme of persecution dyue you out of þe right course, for whose persoumaunce surely ye nede great assistence and strength. Of strength of oure owne powers we cannot assure our selues. God it is, whiche must geue it, to the ende that the whole gloꝝy of all suche thynges as are by vs valiantly done, may be geuen againe vnto him. whiche of his goodnes enrycheth vs with great patience and long suffreyng to endure a abyde for Christes gospelles sake all suche troubles, as may in the meane tyme befall vs. In whiche persecutions suffering it is not enough to be strong without all feare, but rather desewerth it vs, euen iopfully & with a good courage to vndertake & suffer them, getyng thanks to God the father, who hath vouchsafed to call you to suche honoꝝr, that whereas heretofore ye woꝝshipped deuils & idols, ye are now of his goodnes called vnto the felowshippe of the Iewes, whiche by reason that they woꝝshipped the true God were in comparison of you, holy, whiche hath also vouchsafed to cal you to the inheritaunce of life euertlastyng, in hope wherof al thynges whiche in this woꝝld either feare oꝝ flatter vs, must be despised, both for that he hath geuen you wanderyng before in the deepe boungeon of ignorance, the light of the gospel, and so; that also ye whiche heretofore were vnder a vile and flauithy bondage subiecte vnto the tyranny of the deuil pynce of darkenes, are deliuered thence and conueighed into the kyngdome of his most deely beloued sonne, to the intent, that ye byng ioyned into his body should with him enioy our kyngdome.

Wherin suche as are chꝛal to spone, haue no place, and therfore hath God by his sonne made vs free, by whō the synnes of our oide life are forgeuē. So that now his are ye becomen, by whose benefite & mercy ye are restoyed. Consider now, how good a chaunge ye haue made. Before your reconciliacion ye were membyes of the deuil, now are ye planted into Christes body, whose dignitie is so great, that he is the image of God the father, whiche father dwelleth in light, wherunto no man can come. whiche is suchē as can be seen of no man, though as yet a certayne soȝte he be thꝛough the sonne seen, whiche to the father is in all pointes veyre like & equal. For neither is the sonne lesse wyse, nor lesse of might, oꝝ of lesse goodnes than is the father. For of late daies receiued he these perfectiōs, but euertlastyngly before any thyng was made, was he the image of his euertlastyng father, not made, but boꝝne of him, by whō all thynges are made, and of him, whiche onely hath no begynnyng.

He therfore of him selfe begotte his sonne, and by his sonne, and with his sonne made and create al that is ether in heauen oꝝ yearth, both that may be seen and not seen, the deepe angels selfe not excepted, no not the cheefe of them, whither they be maiesties, lordshippes, rules oꝝ powers.

And

Strength  
with al might  
thꝛough his  
glorious po-  
wer, &c.

Whiche hath  
made better  
to be purged  
here of our  
inheritaunce  
of saluacion  
in light.

For by him  
were all thynges  
created.



And albeit these orders and powers farre exceede all other creatures, yet see they passing measure vnder him, to whom ye are ioynd: for as muche as whatsoeuer is made, must to his maker nedes be inferior. Now are al thinges not onely made by Christ, but also by him gouerned & preserued, in whiche pointe he is also to his father like a equal. For was the sonne begotten after other creatures, but was before al other thinges, by whom al thinges haue theyr being, and should without him perishe. were they not by him maintained. Thus see ye the excellencie and preeminence of Christ, whiche thing I tel you of, lest any manne of Angels thinke more, than he should.

Sub he is the head of the body, euen of the congregation: he is the beginning and The first. first begotten of the dead, that in all thinges he might haue the preeminence.

And lest peradventure his glorious and excellent maiestie so scare you away from him, that to aspyre and come vnto the fauor of God the father ye thinke it necessaie to seeke vpon some other meane, heare againe and learne to knowe, how good he is. Christ is in suche sorte chiefe ruler and Lorde of Angels, as I sayd, that he netherlesse vouchsafeth also to be head of the church, whom he hath so ioynd vnto him, that it cleaueth & is coupled vnto him, euen as the natural body cleaueth vnto the head. Whatsoeuer therfore is alreadye done in the heade, the same must to vs be comen.

He lyeth of all other rise againe from death, not to the intent he should be immortall onely him selfe, but to the ende he might enhaunce by his members to the felowship of his immortal life. Like what is in the first frutes of grayne offered, the same is generally in the whole heape. He is in dede prince and author of resurrection, and so shall we through him also rise againe. And as among thynges create he is chiefe, in suche sorte yet, that himself was not create and made: so is he in resouryng creatures chiefe, so that as we are for out being & byrth bounde vnto his goodnes: so should we for oute seconde byrthe baptisme to liue euertlastyngly, be muche more beholding vnto him.

For is the first  
beginning and  
first begotten  
of the dead, &c.

For it pleased the father, that in him should all fulnes dwell, and by him to reue- The reue- nile al thinges vnto him selfe, and to set at peace by him through the blood of his crosse both thinges in heauen and thinges in earth.

For so hath it pleased the father, that the sonne should with all fulnes of godly power and goodnes be replenished, which should in him so abide and dwell, that we should nedes no where to bozome any thyng, synce the father neither will nor can do any thing but that the sonne can do and will. And lyth the fathers pleasure was, that so it should be, it becometh not vs curiously to demaunde and seeke why, synce it can not be but best, whatsoeuer his wisedome hath once decreed.

What do him  
should all ful-  
nes dwell, &c.

This wyle to do (I say) God the father thought beste, both for oute weale and saluacion, and most for his owne glory, to reconcile al thinges vnto him, not by the ministerie of Angels, but by his owne sonne, whiche with his blood sheddyng, and tormentyng vpon the crosse, should abo-

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the same, whiche broke the peace and concord betwixte heauenly and earthly creatures. & set all thinges at peace, bothe heauenly & earthly, making them in Christ to agree together, and to be at an vniuite one with an other.

*The text.* And you whiche were sometyms fawce of and enemies, because your iniquities were set in euil woordes, hath he now yet reconciled in the body of his fleshe, through death we make you holy & blameable, & without fault in his owne sight, if ye continue goodly and stablished in the fayth, and be not moued awaye from the hope of the gospel, wherof ye haue heard, how that it is preached among all creatures whiche are vnder heauen, wherof I haule am make a minister,

Of this numbre so reconciled are ye now becomen. ye, (I saye) whiche in yeres past were in suche sorte straungers to God, that in neede of him ye worshipped images of deuille, not only wilfully dissenting from him, but also vying your selues as his cruel aduersaries, whom he hath yet to him selfe reconciled beinge suche as neither looked for so much at his hand, and inuche lesse desired it, and made of you his enemies, his frenches & sonnes, not by the ministry of Iungis, but by the bodily death of his onely begotten sonne, whom for that purpose his pleasure was, that he wold take our mortall fleshe vpon him.

And because there can be betwixte God and synners no peace, it hath pleased him selfe to forgive al the offences of our former life, to the intent he woulde in his sight make you holy, blameable, and faultles. Wherfore I praye you can lay your olde deutes to your charge, if he be once contented. And surely contented wyl he be, if once vpon his fre receyving of you vnto the fapth of the gospel, ye continually abide in your profession, & leaning vpon this sure and sounde foundation steepe your selues so steadfast and stable, that neither man nor angel be able to moue you fro Christ, of who ye must hope to receiue all suche giftes as the gospel promyseth, wher vnto ye gaue credence, whiche hath not onely been preached vnto you, but also to all nations contained vnder heauen.

Vnstedfastnes it is to fall away fro that, whiche ye haue once allowed, an impudent and a shameles point to taken and counte that thing for haine, in belief wherof al the worlde agreeeth, and finally to stir from that whose preacher and minister I haule am, whiche woulde not leaue and forgoe mine owne countreys law, & chaunge it with the gospel of Christ, were I not fully persuaded, that this geate is heauenly and cometh fro God.

*The text.* Now for I in my sufferings for you, & fulfil that whiche is behynd of the passions of Christ in my fleshe, for his bodies sake, which is the congregation: wherof I am make a minister, according to the ordinance of God, which ordinance was given me vnto you warde to fulfil the woorde of God, & ministerie whiche hath been hid since & world begunne, and since the beginning of generacions, but now is opened to his saintes, to who God woulde make knowne, what the glorious riches of this minictrie is among the gentiles, which riches is Christ in you, the hope of glory, whom we preache, warning all men, and teaching all men in al boycesome, to make all men perswade in Christ & cke. Wherfor I also laboer & strue, such as earnestly as his strength worketh in me mightily,

Now am I so thoroughly persuaded, & the gospel is a thing of truth, that I not onely am so farre from beinge ashamed of, & repenyng my selfe therof, that I wyl also ioyfully suffer, & counte stripes, imprisonment and

and charynes, such matter to reioyse and gloie of, which to mentynge I  
 enowre not for any offence of myne. but suffer them for your weale, whom  
 I save, though the Jewes neuer so muche save nape, haue no lesse righte  
 to the benefite of the gospell, than haue the Jewes themselves. And why  
 should I not save, that I for your weale suffer, for whom Christ suffered?  
 Why should the Apostles be lothe to do that, which Christ our prince and  
 maister disdayned not to do? Christ suffered for us not onely in his owne  
 body, but also in maner suffereth in oures, such as one supplying and ful-  
 filling by his ministers such thynges as mighte in his afflictions seeme  
 vnperfecte, not that his death of it selfe is insufficient, but because the af-  
 flictions and punishmentes of the head and members, of the prince and  
 ministers, are in maner one. These punishmentes the greater and moie ve-  
 bemente they be, the moie redoubte and make they to the salnes and pre-  
 fectiō of your saluatiō. And not for your saluatiō onely, but for the weale  
 also of Christes whole body, which is the church, do I the office commit-  
 ted vnto me, for to me is committed the cure and ouer sight of the congrega-  
 tion. For Christ hath set and placed me in his stee, and hath deliuered  
 vnto me the custodie of his owne bodye, specially for that porcion, which  
 is of the Gentiles to be receyued to the gospell, to the intente I should in  
 my labour supply that, which he seemed to lacke, and to publyshe that, which  
 was so many hundred yeares before this tyme hidden from the Gentiles,  
 and to teache, that not onely the Jewes, but the Gentiles also haue throughe  
 faith an entry into this welthy state of the gospell. This to do was by god  
 long since purposed, but yet was this his purpose hidden vntill this tyme  
 from the worlde, and is now through my preaching opened to all such,  
 as forsaking theyr former vngacious lyfe embrace that doctrine of Christ,  
 to whome it hath pleased god to declare, howe glorious his riches is to-  
 wards vs, when by publyshing this his so long hidden misterie the whole  
 worlde perceyuetly, howe that free saluatiō, which men seek thought  
 was offered onely to the Jewes, is now common vnto all nacions, & that  
 the keeping of Moyses lawe is not requyred, but faith onely, so that men  
 doubt not of the promises made in the gospell. In steede of all such thynges,  
 wherein the Jewes haue had a foolyshe confidence, Christ onely is for  
 you sufficient. If he be in you, ye haue no cause to be lothe of the hope ye  
 stande in, being both sure ynough, and also throughe hym glorious, who  
 of hymselfe will vndoubtedly personifie, as muche as he hath promised.  
 Hym preache we of, and not Moyses nor aungels, aduertysing & teaching  
 not onely the Jewes, but also all people of the worlde, and in so dooing lea-  
 uing nothing vntouched, which appertayneth to the wisdom of the gos-  
 pell. And this do we to the intent all men should vnderstand, that whither  
 they be circumcised or not circumcised, they weale is in nothing els to be  
 set, but in Christ Iesus. So byng which faith into mennes myndes I  
 in such sorte labour, that for auancing thereof I thinke it not paynfull  
 to put my selfe in so many reopardies and perilles, which are in dede moie  
 weightie, than our weakenes is able to abyde & suffer. But strong & mightie  
 is he, by whose ayde and maiyntenance I do these actes, who also whē  
 neede requirerh, with working of myracles by vs, byngeth my preaching  
 in credence.

Shal I  
 in my last  
 righte for  
 it.

For he be  
 him take  
 whiche is the  
 congregatiō.

It seeme me  
 precher, whiche  
 hym all men  
 and teaching  
 etc.

# The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

## The. ii. Chapter.

**The text.** For I woulde that ye knewe, howe great care that I haue for you and for them that are at Laodicea, and so as many as haue not sent my person in the flesh, that they might be comforted when they are knyt together in loue, and in all riches of full vnderstanding, for to knowe the misterie of God the father, and of Christe, in whom are hidde all the treasures of wysdomme and knowlege.



And this muche haue I sayde, (ye Colossians) not to boaste my self vnto you, but because I couste, & ye should knowe, howe carefull I am, and what reuerencie I put my selfe in, not only for suche, as I haue presently taught the gospell vnto, but for them also, whiche by sighte knowe me not, especially for you and the Laodiceans, whom thoughte I neuer sawe with my bodily eyes, yet see I them continually with the eyes of my hearte, glad of your

increase & furtheraunce, fearful if I espye your enticenes and godly conuictions either to be in reuerencie or to be inconstant & wauer. For is it for my selfe so greatly auaylable, that suche as neuer sawe me, knowe what labours & paines I take for them, as it dothe auantage them. For by my penuryties, by my reuerencies, and afflictions are they more picked furth and enforced to consent and cleaue more together in godly charitie, lyke & members of one body knyt and surely mortified, whereby also menne more clearly perceiue and more certainly beleue the bountifull goodness of god the father toward all mankinde, yea toward all creatures, abundantly flowing abroad, by opening nowe through Iesus Christe the secret misterie, which hath hitherto bene hidden, whiche is, that desyre vpon one, for we should desyre no worldly wysdome, be that neuer so great, which the wyle Philosophers promise, or teachers of Idolles lawe, or anye suche as boaste that they by speaking with aunghels are taughte, for as muche as in hym alone are containyd and hydden all the treasures of wysdome and fruitful knowlege. Of this fountayne maye we caly drawe, almuche as is to perfitte saluation requyred.

What they  
better might  
be comforted,  
et.

**The text.** This I saye lest any man should beguyle you with railing wordes, for thoughte I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirite, toying and schoolinge you as befor, and your desires sayd in Christe.

These popmes for this ende thoughte I it good to warne you of, because ye should with all diligence take heed, lest anye begyn instruct with worldly wysdome agaynst the playnes of Christes gospell, blinde and deceyue you with fallie tales, bring yet suche tales, as haue a colourable apparence of truth and lykelynes. So sece the wyle men of this world so capricious and subtle reasons of theyr inuencion went to entangle simple people, of whiche soxe I knowe that some there are among you, watching howe they maye corrupte your sayth.



For albeit I be absent from you, and see not presently, what is done there, yet am I in mynde among you present, with all my better reioysing to see the good order and condicion of your lyfe, and therewith the soundnes and strength of the sure confidence, whiche ye haue in Iesus Christus, to whome ye haue once wholy committed your selues.

*¶ I thought I be absent in cap. ii. fol. b.*

As ye haue therfore receyued Christ Iesu the lord, such so walke ye in hym, so that ye be rooted and built in hym, and established through the word, as ye haue learned; and therein be plenteous with giving thanks.

*¶ The text.*

Nowe remembreth this, that ye vpon this good beginning continue and profit more and more, and as ye haue once receyued and believed, that Iesus Christus our saviour is all goodnes, the head and wellspring of our felicitie: so let all your lyfe agree and consent with your faith and profession, providing alwayes that as ye are through baptism graffed into him: that ye lykewyle abide in hym and gather strength. And as the sure and strong foundation of the doctrine of Christes gospel is once already layed in you: so labour ye to build vp ther vpon such a worke, as is so; such a foundation meete and convenient. And take heede, that ye waue not this waie or that waie, as euery blaste of newe doctrine moueth you, but stonde steadfast and stable in that ye haue once learned, and endeuous not only to stonde steadfast, but also to increase euery daye from better to better, that your faith and frutes of godly lyfe being dayly more and more augmented ye maye alwayes haue some newe thing to geue god thanks for, wherewithin be ye thanke for all that is by you well done.

Beware, lest any man spoyle you through philosophie and discretfull vanitie, after the tradition of men, and after the ordinances of the worlde, and not after Christe.

*¶ The text.*

Suche as would bring you fro your simplicitie, watche busely, watche muste ye on the other lyke wyse, leaue bring as it were enchanted with the copall and glittering apparances of theyr philosophie, ye be fro your sound faith alied and brought to the vaine deuices of men, and so become as it were a spoyle of praye for your aduersaries, as ye shall undoubtedly be, if ye turne from the truth of the gospel, and be led with the rule of menne onely making, whiche stande in suche thinges, as maye with our carnal eyes be sene, and in the grosse pointes of this worlde, wher as Christes doctrine is heavenly and spirituall, and teacheth the righte and true religion, whiche standeth in myndes, and not in meates and drinke, no; in bodily apparell, no no; in keeping of dayes, no; yet in washing of handes, whiche thinges to true religion make nothinge hurte pointes with; a v be rather fro Christe, and deuise fro the wellspring, from whence it were mete we sought for all grace and goodnes.

*¶ And beware lest ye be brought from the truth of the gospel.*

For in hym dwelleth all the fulnes of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in him: whiche is the head of all rule and power, by whome also ye are circumcised with circumcision whiche is done with our handes, forasmuche as ye haue put of the sensfull bodye of the fleshe through the circumcision that is in Christ, in that ye are buried with hym through baptism in whome ye are also risen agayne through faith, is wrought by the operation of God, whiche rayseth hym from dead.

*¶ The text.*

## The paraphrase of Erasmus upon the Epistle

In him meet  
with all & ful-  
fillment of & good  
lyne begotten.  
cc.

For into hym are not some certayne giftes deriued, as oute of the r-  
pet a little water runneth into the dyche, but in hym resteth and dwelleth  
corporeally the hole fulnes of the godhead, so that yf ye haue hym, ye neede  
not to seke either for the shadowes of Moyses lawe or the subtile conuer-  
aunce of worldly wisdom. The trouth is plainly declared vs, as al our  
sences beare recorde, no neede haue we to seke for figures or doubtful prom-  
ises. For once ye are once grafted in Christ, and framed into one bodye  
with hym, why shoulde you further loke to haue any thyng? For since he  
lacketh nothing, & would haue all his treasure comen to al men, through  
hym & in hym needes must ye be made compleat, whither ye lacke wisdom  
or power. For as he is the wellspring of wisdom, which can neuer be dry-  
ed vp, so is he the heade of all power & rule. For is ther any power, no not  
of the hyghest order of Angels (I say,) but that the same to hym boweth  
his knees. Jewes persecutours endeouore to bring you in minde, that it  
is a weighty matier, to haue you circumcised, as they be, as though the  
state of mannes body and such externe thynges brought vs into goodes  
fauour. But rather be in this perswaded, that whosoever haue Christ, en-  
ioy with hym all the gloire and commendacion of circumcision. And who  
to haue not Christ to them is all they; circumcision vayne and vnprofi-  
table. They haue but the shadow of circumcision, ye therof in your soules  
haue the verye trouth. For sythe the Jewes circumcision meaneth, that  
grece and carnall desyers, shoulde be cut out of al they; soules, which now  
loke for nothing but heauenly thynges, but circumcised needes must they  
be, whiche with conscious myndes still labour to haue more, which please  
their bodies, whiche is enuy & malice pryng away, which vayne gloriouse  
like for worldly playe, & despayre of heauenly rewardes. But ye contrarie  
see through Christ verily circumcised, not with that circumcision, which is  
done with mannes handes, but after a spirituall kynde of circumcision.  
For haue ye a little piece onely of the carnall man pared awaye, but from  
you is cut the whole bodye defyled with syn, and all corrupted with car-  
nal iustices, & that through the spirituall circumcision of Christ Iesus. For  
as he dyng for loke his bodye, that was subiect to death, & rysing againe  
receyued a body, whiche coulde not dye: so are ye in baptism through the  
lyrite of god with hym spirituallly dead, casting of all the synes of your  
olde lyfe, and not only deade with hym, but also buried with hym. For whe  
ynfull desyers are kyled, perfite quyetnes of mynde foloweth. And after  
suche forgoing of your bodies, which were thal to synne (whiche synne is  
the very death of the soule) ye are through Christ with hym risen agayne  
free from synne, no; for your desyres, but only because ye stedfastly beleue  
in god, who by his mightie power restored Christ agayne from death to  
lyfe, and that he also in you by his power worketh, that upon free remissio  
of all your synnes through the death of his sone, ye shoulde hencefurthe  
liue with him subiect to no sin, but through innocent & vprighte life make  
haste forwarde to the life, that shall neuer haue ende. Thanks then shoulde  
god the father haue for all suche thynges, whiche he through his sone ge-  
meth you. Nothing aunantaged it the Jewes, because they were circum-  
cised, and but circumcision to you which are Gentiles, was no hinderaunce.

In whom ye  
are also risen a-  
gain through  
baptism.

2. to be b. inuencel was therfore a double la. he becom e reuer who  
 1. to be b. inuencel was therfore a double la. he becom e reuer who  
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## of St. Paul to the Colossians. cap. iii. fol viii.

[illegible]

2. I have at this time a petition from the wife of the member, Elizabeth, and she has been married and has two children. I would like to know if she is eligible to be a member.

But above all other garments especially apparel your selves with  
christian charity which is to care for our neighbour as if he laboured  
to do every man good you to do good to each. This is the private and  
sure bond which knit the body of Christ is joined together and the mem-  
bers abide fast which would else fall one from another. With charity we obtain  
peace and concord not the common peace which men make of but which  
as is made and maintained by the mightiest power of Christ. Therefore  
let bet a war in our breasts wrong and have this upper band which  
maintaineth peace which and contention have the victory. For, as  
Paul hath called you to concord and hereby so, that purpose reconciled you and  
brought in and make you as it were one body to the extent of the mem-  
bers of one body though among you there be of one mind.

For further information, call the number of this line or please write to the nearest telephone office. The last number of this line is 4444.

Be not unthankful and forgetful of Gods great goodness toward you. If it be so, that we not now have been at peace, had we not freely forgiven be all our sinnes and death our brother forgetting this make hatred againe his brother for a little displeasure. Continue not among your selfe, y<sup>e</sup> come hence in wo, our wo doth not let the wo, or of either the which the other the same belonging to pettish grudges live and continue in your selfe, that in him we have & growe wile o that not only you selfe knowe what is to Christ acceptable but be also able one to teache another if any be out of the way and to give an other warning. Be in his duty be like in his manifestation as all time mercy and good in hope of the better to come, giving place to Gods pleasures in his mercy and in spiritual longes praising God, not with our mouth onely, but also more, graciously with our heart, for such are the worship, with which

## The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

is belited, lest any thinke it a great praise to God, onely with his mouth to make a noyse.

**The text.** And whatsoever ye do in worde or dede, do all in the name of the lord Iesu, geuyng thanks to God the father by him.

Finally whatsoever ye do either in worde or dede, do it so, that it make to the glory of our lord Iesus, so that all your life and conuersation sanner, expresse and resemble him. Whyles ye are this wyse doyng, if any thing befall you, whether it be prosperouse or other wyse, be not therewith either proude, or dismayed, but so; all geue thanks to God the father throughe his sonne, by whom he turneth all suche chaunces to our weale and auantage.

**The text.** Ye wyues, submitte your selues to your owne husbands, as it is comly in the lord. Ye husbands, loue your wyues and be not bitter unto them. Ye children obey your fathers and mothers in all thinges, for that is well pleasing vnto the lord.

Ye wyues submitte your selues obediently vnto your husbands, so belemeth it suche as haue taken vpo them Christes name, for whom it is mete in all goobnes to go beyond other. Ye husbands againe loue your wyues, whom ye must remembre in suche condicion to be subiecte vnto you, that yet to them ye should not be sharpe and bitter. Ye childre n be in all thinges obedient to your fathers and mothers, though they commaunde you painful busines, so that the same be not vngodly. For it is Christes will and pleasure that ye should so do.

**The text.** Ye fathers, prouoke not your children (to anger) lest they be of a desperate mynde. Ye seruantes be obedient vnto them that are your bodily maisters in all thinges: not with the service as men please, but in singleness of heart fearyng God. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartely, as though ye did it to the lord, and not vnto men; knowing that of the lord ye shall receiue the reward of inheritance: for ye serue the lord Christ.

Again ye fathers abuse not your authoritie vpon your children, nor prouoke them so with cruelnes, that they dismaye. Ye seruantes in all pointes obey your maisters, whom by the laue of man ye are bounde to serue, not onely because they see, and loke vpon you, and so; feare, as the comen sorte of heathen seruantes are wonte to do, thinking that they haue done theyr dutie, if they offende not theyr maister beyng but a mā, but also with a simple and an vnfained heart doyng your dutie, not onely so; feare of man, but also so; feare of God, who seeth, with what mynde ye do, whatsoever ye do. No; consider in your service, what your maister beyng but a man deserueth, but what service soeuer ye do vnto him, what kynde of one soeuer he be, coumpte it, as done to Christ, and not to men, assuryng your selfe, that of him ye shall receiue the reward of heavenly inheritance, though your vnkynde maister geue you nothing for your labo; nor accompte you among his children. For whyles ye for Christes sake do service to vnniete maisters, ye serue Christ.

**The text.** But he that doth ynnue, shall receiue for his tyme, whether there any respects of persons with God,

For as the maister if he against his seruant any thing offende, though he



he among men be not punished, he shall not yet before god escape punishment: so the seruauant that well both his due tie, albeit he haue no rewarde of men, whiche with themselves thynke, that they to they; seruantes are nothing bound, when they haue done they; duties, yet shal they not loose they; rewarde at gods hand, who putteth no difference betwixte persons but betwixt mynides, no; considereth a mannes conuiction, but how wel he doth.

### The. iiii. Chapter.

Maisters be vnto your seruantes, that whiche is iust, and equall, knowing that ye also haue a master in heauen. The text.



Sayme ye that are maisters abuse not the authoritie giuen you by mennes lawes, & not so; any perfection of nature, to exercise tyranny vpo your seruantes, but gyue them that is iust and lawfull, departing with them sufficiently, in suche thynges as are so; naturall vles necessarye, & make not so; your pleasure to muche of some, intollerablie oppressing other, assuring your selues, that ye are rather with them felowes in seruite, thā maisters, forasmuche as ye haue with them one common master in heauen. at whose handes ye shal like like fauer, as your selues haue shewed to your seruantes.

Continue in prayer & walke in the same, w<sup>th</sup> thankes giuing, praying also for vs, that god maye open vnto vs the doore of utterance, that we maye speake the mystrie of Christ, (whereofe I am also in these bondes) that I maye utter it, as it becommeth me to speke. The text.

And because I would ye should be more worthy mebers of Chyistes body, continue in prayer, not as dull & heauy people by reason of any surfeiting, but as sober & wakefull, in the same also graping god thankes, so y<sup>e</sup> pe not only desyre of god thinges to saluacio profitable, but also gyue him thankes for his dayly giftes, to the intent that whē he seeth you both thankful & myndefull, he maye be towarde you more beneficiall. In the meane tyme ye shal also desyre god for vs, y<sup>e</sup> it maye please his goodnes in suche sorte to take awaye al impedimentes, that his gospel maye freely be preached, y<sup>e</sup> he through faith openyng mennes heartes the mystrie maye enter into al mennes mindes which beyng hitherto hiden, y<sup>e</sup> rather would not haue knowne vnto all, as touchyng Christ, through whom without helpe of the lawe he offereth vnto al people saluation, for preaching wherof I lye in these bondes, so y<sup>e</sup> nothing lette me among al men to publish & sp<sup>eeke</sup> a bode y<sup>e</sup> gospel of Christ, which am desirous so to do freely & about feare, eue as he commaunded me.

Walke wisely rewarde them, that are without, and loke new oportunitie.

Vse your selues soberly & discretly with suche, as are to Chyistes religiō straungers, so that in your maners nothing appeare, y<sup>e</sup> maye either moue them to persecute you, or withd<sup>rawe</sup> they; mynides & fauer from the gospel. For ynce it can not be auoyd, but that ye must trde with heathē, be conuersant, and with them liue familiarly, let them in you synde, that through your new profession ye are in all poyntes becommē thereby better & more courtlye, namely yf any suche thing chaūce, wherin w<sup>thout</sup> breach of religion ye maye do them pleasure. Nowe must we specially for the present tyme endeouor, that all be allured to the profession of the gospel. The text.

## The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

The oportunitie wherof must not with tangling and bapne contentions be losse, but be bought rather with all the precious goodes and treasures that we haue. for this gye ouer your honoure, depaite with your money, for this auaire with your desier to reuenge. yf with the losse of suche thinges the gospel be furthered, then thinke as it is in dede that your aduantage is great.

**the text.** Let your speache be alwayes well favoured and poudered with salte, that ye maye knowe, howe ye ought to answer euerie man.

Let not your speache to them be reprocchfull and rough. but let it smelke of courttesy and gentleness, & be poudered with the salte of wysdome, remembryng that gentle speache rather couereth fierie blowes, & discession teacheth, what, to whome, & with what sobernes we ought to answer. Youe must otherwile vse our selfe to warde princes and gouernours of the worlde, otherwile with meane men, & otherwile with lowe persons, after one sorte with suche as are gentle, & after an other sorte with suche as are furiouse, otherwile with learned, otherwile with vnlearned. After suche sorte muste our language be tempered vnto euery manes condiction, that it may further & promote the gospel. Some time better is it to gye place when he whome ye intende to teache, with reprocchfull wordes gaigneth your teachyng, or he whome thou speakest vnto, goeth courttesly aboute to butt thy doctrine.

**the text.** Of all my busines shall ye be certified by ephebus, the beloued brother and faithfull minister, and fellowe seruant in the lord, whom I haue sent vnto you for the same purpose, that he might knowe what ye doe, and that he might comfort your hearts, in one consensu a faithfull and beloued brother whiche is one of you. wher shall I shewe you of all thinges whiche are & sayng betes.

Of my state I wyte not vnto you, but of that that Tychicus, the bearer of these letters, certifie you, through one comen profession, my well beloued brother, faithfull minister, & fellowe seruant in preaching the gospel, whome I for this purpose sente thither, both to the intent that by hym ye shoulde knowe, what is here done among vs, and by hym to be certified, howe ye doe, that your members maye through his communication be refreshed, and myne also by his good reporte made of you. And with Tychicus haue I sent Onesimus, whome I would ye shoulde not esteeme and iudge by his olde kynde of lyfe, since he is now my faithfull, and beloued brother, whome for this cause ye oughte to make the more of, because he is a Gentile as ye be, and of an vncircumcised one, turned to Christe. These two shall to you make faithfull reporte, of suche thinges as are here done among vs, as ferre as is expedient for you to knowe.

**the text.** Aristarchus my prison fellowe saluteth you, and agabus Barnabas syder a sanctification whome ye receyued commaundementes. Yf he come vnto you, receyue hym: and Tychus, whiche is called Tychus, whiche are of the circumcision, whiche onely acc my workethowde vnto the kyngdome of god, whiche haue bene vnto my consolation.

Aristarchus saluteth you, and albeit he be a Jew, yet for his like faith, ye shoulde make muche of hym. for hym haue I for Christes gospels sake of my enprisonment fellowe and pretaker. Marcus also, Barnabas syders sonne whome ye wel knowe, saluteth you, whome I at an other tyme commended vnto you, commaunding you than, as we nowe do, that if he come to you, that ye with al gentleness receyue and enterteyne hym. Tychus also, whose surname is Tychus greeteth you.

These

of **S. Paule** to the **Colossians.** cap. iiii. fol. x

These are in dede, to you of a strange nation, I save of the Jewes, and yet of you worthy to be favoured, because they in preaching the kyngdō of god are my workelowes, and were vnto me in the afflictions, whiche I suffer, verp therewith.

Epaphras the seruante of Christus, (which is one of you) saluteth you, and alwayes labourerth feruently for you in prayers, that ye maye stande perfite and full, in al the will of god. For I beare hym remembrance, that he hath a feruent mynde for you, and them that are of Laodicia, and them that are of Hierapolis.

Epaphras greeteth you, whiche is one of you, not only by the profession of Christes name, but also one of the same countrey, who so hartely fauoreth you, that he moste feruently for you maketh his prayer to god, & ye by his helpe maye steadfastly continew in that ye haue begunne, and not be vnperfite christians, but in doing al suche thinges, as god requirerth, perseute and full. For in this I beare hym remembrance, that he hath a feruent loue towardes you, and not toward you onely, but also towardes all them, that are of Laodicia and Hierapolis, whiche border nigh vnto you.

Deare Lucas the physician greeteth you and Demas. Salute the brethren whiche are of Laodicia, and salute Symphas, and the congregation, whiche is in his house.

Lucas the physician, who I singularly loue, greeteth you, & so doth also Demas, whiche as yet is with me. Salute alwell other brethren, that be at Laodicia, as also especially Sympha, with all the congregation, that is in his house.

And when the epistle is red of you, make that it be red also in the congregation of the Laodicians, and that ye by the word teach the spirite of Laodicia.

Asone as this epistle is rehearsed among you, cause that the same also be read in the congregation of the Laodicians, and agayne read ye the Epistle, which from Laodicia I wrote to Timothee, that they maye profite more.

And saye to Archippus: take hede to thy office, that thou haue verp much in the lord, that thou fulfill it. The salutation by the hand of me Paule, remember my bondes, the grace of our lord Iesu Christ be with you. Amen.

Save in my name these wordes to Archippus your ruler: loke about and take hede, what charge thou hast taken in hande. It is no mannes business and cure, but gods, which is committed vnto the. See then performe that thou hast undertaken, as whiche shalte therof to the lord yelde accounte. But because this Epistle with you shoulde be of more credit, lo I subscribe gretynges to you all with myne owne hande, with Paulus hande (I save) whome ye well knowe. Remember my bondes, whom I beare for your sake, and loue after suche sorte, that I of them be not made ashamed. The grace of Iesus be alwayes with you. Amen.

Finis,